

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

bourgeois-democratic revolution cannot be carried through to an end, not to speak of the socialist revolution.

20. The petty bourgeoisie in the colonial and semi-colonial countries plays a very important role. It consists of various strata, which in different periods of the national-revolutionary movement play very diverse roles.

The artisan, who is hit by the competition of foreign imported goods, is hostilely disposed towards imperialism. At the same time, he is interested in the unlimited exploitation of his journeymen and apprentices, and accordingly, he is hostilely disposed towards the class-conscious labour movement. At the same time, also, he usually suffers himself from the exploitation of trading and usury capital. The exceedingly ambiguous and hopeless position of this stratum of the petty bourgeoisie determines its vacillations, and it frequently falls under the influence of Utopian reactionaries.

The small trader—both in town and village—is connected with village exploitation through usury and trade, and he clings to the old forms of exploitation in preference to the prospects of an expansion of the internal market. These strata, however, are not homogeneous. These sections of the trading bourgeoisie which in one form or another are connected with the Compradores occupy a different position from those sections of the activity of which is limited mainly to the internal market.

The petty bourgeois intelligentsia, the students, and such like, are very frequently the most determined representatives, not only of the specific interests of the petty bourgeoisie, but also of the general objective interests of the entire national bourgeoisie, and, in the first period of the national movement, they often come out as the spokesmen of the nationalist struggle. Their role at the head of the movement is comparatively important. In general, they cannot act as representatives of peasant interests, for the very social strata from which they come are connected with landlordism. The upsurge of the revolutionary wave may drive them into the labour movement, bringing with them their petty bourgeois ideology of vacillation and indecision. Only a few of them in the course of the struggle are able to break with their own class and rise to an understanding of

the tasks of the class struggle of the proletariat, and to become active defenders of the interests of the latter. It frequently happens that the petty bourgeois intellectuals give to their ideology a socialist or even Communist colour. In the struggle against imperialism they have played, and in such countries as India and Egypt they even now still partially play, a revolutionary role. The mass movement may draw them after it, but it may also push them into the camp of extreme reaction or, at least, cause the spread of Utopian reactionary tendencies in their ranks.

Alongside of these strata, there are to be found in the colonial towns considerable sections of urban poor, the position of which objectively drives them to the support of revolution,—artisans who do not exploit the labour of others, street traders, unemployed intellectuals, ruined peasants seeking